

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 GUATEM 04214 301705Z

43

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 L-03 NSC-10 AID-20 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 OMB-01 SS-15

MMS-03 IGA-02 TRSE-00 RSR-01 IO-13 /126 W

----- 098000

R 301600Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0685

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

USCINCSO

JCS

S E C R E T GUATEMALA 4214

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF SOUTHCOM FROM PANAMA

REF: STATE 164406

SUMMARY: WE BELIEVE THE TRANSFER OF USSOUTHCOM FROM THE CANAL ZONE TO THE U.S. WOULD BE BOTH FEASIBLE AND DESIRABLE IN TERMS OF LONG-RANGE U.S. INTERESTS PROVIDED THE SERVICES FURNISHED BY THE INTERAMERICAN MILITARY SCHOOLS COMPLEX PRESENTLY IN C.Z. ARE CONTINUED UNDIMINISHED SOMEPLACE ELSE. END SUMMARY.

1. USSOUTHCOM PRESENCE IN PANAMA HAS NEVER BEEN A MAJOR ISSUE IN U.S./GUATEMALAN RELATIONS AND IS NOT LIKELY TO BECOME ONE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN A MINOR IRRITANT OVER THE YEARS, BECAUSE MANY POLITICALLY AWARE GUATEMALANS HAVE INCREASINGLY FELT A RESENTMENT THAT THE U.S. WAS USING THE CANAL

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 GUATEM 04214 301705Z

ZONE FOR MILITARY PURPOSES NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE

DEFENSE OF THE PANAMA CANAL. THIS RESENTMENT IS FELT TO A MUCH LESSER DEGREE BY THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY WHO FOR THE MOST PART BELIEVE THAT THE PROXIMITY AND VALUE OF THE INTERAMERICAN SCHOOLS COMPLEX AND THE ADVANTAGES GUATEMALA DERIVES FROM IT FAR OUTWEIGH ANY NATIONALISTIC RESERVATIONS THEY MAY HAVE ABOUT THE U.S. EXERCISING EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION IN A LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT MOVING SOUTHCOM TO THE U.S. IS QUITE FEASIBLE SINCE MOST SOUTHCOM FUNCTIONS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE PHYSICAL DEFENSE OF THE CANAL, COULD BE PERFORMED AS WELL IN THE U.S. AS IN PANAMA; AND SOME FUNCTIONS, SUCH AS THE DIRECTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, COULD PROBABLY BE PERFORMED MORE EFFECTIVELY IN WASHINGTON IF ADEQUATE TRAVEL FUNDS WERE PROVIDED FOR THOSE INVOLVED.

3. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE MOVE WOULD BE DESIRABLE IN THAT IT WOULD NOT ONLY REMOVE A MINOR IRRITANT HERE BUT WOULD HEAD OFF WHAT WE IMAGINE WILL BE A RISING TIDE OF CRITICISM ELSEWHERE IN THE HEMISPHERE. THE REMOVAL OF SOUTHCOM WOULD HAVE ONE NEGATIVE REACTION IN THAT IT WOULD BE INTERPRETED BY GUATEMALAN MILITARY AND SOME OF THE MORE CONSERVATIVE HIGH CIVILIAN OFFICIALS (INCLUDING FONMIN ARENALES) AS A SIGN OF U.S. WEAKNESS-OF GIVING IN TO PANAMA UNDER PRESSURE. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THIS REACTION WOULD BE LOW KEY AND TRANSITORY AND BALANCED BY FACT THAT AT HEART THEY AGREE WITH THE PANAMANIAN POSITION.

4. WE WOULD ADD ONE IMPORTANT CAVEAT TO OUR RECOMMENDATION FOR SOUTHCOM'S TRANSFER, NAMELY, THAT THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE INTERAMERICAN MILITARY SCHOOLS COMPLEX BE CONTINUED UNDIMINISHED SOMEPLACE ELSE. THIS FACILITY, WHICH PROVIDES TRAINING IN A BILINGUAL CONTEXT TO ALL LEVELS OF THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, HAS BEEN AN INVALUABLE AID TO THE MAINTENANCE OF U.S. INFLUENCE WITH THE MILITARY IN GUATEMALA. WE ASSUME THIS IS TRUE IN OTHER HEMISPHERE COUNTRIES. WE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 GUATEM 04214 301705Z

THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT IF SOUTHCOM WERE TO BE MOVED, THE INTERAMERICAN SCHOOLS COMPLEX SHOULD GO TO AN AREA SUCH AS MIAMI OR PUERTO RICO, WHERE LATIN STUDENTS CAN STUDY IN A BILINGUAL AMBIENCE, AND THAT ACTION BE TAKEN TO REMOVE LEGISLATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON THE NUMBER OF MILITARY STUDENTS IN THE CONTINENTAL U.S.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT MOST THIRD NATIONS WOULD WANT TO

SEE THE U.S. KEEP THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF COMBAT FORCES
IN THE CANAL ZONE NECESSARY FOR THE ACTUAL PROTECTION
OF THE CANAL. IN THE FUTURE THEY MIGHT WANT TO SEE
PANAMA SHARE AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE CANAL, BUT FOR THE PRESENT
THEY WOULD WELCOME THE GREATER STABILITY INHERENT IN
THE U.S. CONTINUING TO HAVE THE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY
FOR THIS ROLE.
DREYFUSS

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: thigpegh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973GUATEM04214
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS DREYFUSS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: GUATEMALA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973086/aaaaaeep.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 164406
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: thigpegh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <23-Jan-2002 by thigpegh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRANSFER OF SOUTHCOM FROM PANAMA
TAGS: OGEN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005